



News from HIPAA & Medicaid

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR THE BILLING STAFFS OF HEALTH-CARE PROVIDERS:

HIPAA's "H-DAY" -- OCTOBER 16, 2003 -- IS FINALLY HERE, AND WASHINGTON STATE MEDICAID HAS GOT YOU COVERED!

OLYMPIA, Wash. – Whether you are HIPAA-ready, HIPAA-waiting or even HIPAA-nervous, this Thursday (October 16, 2003) represents a watershed for the nation's health-care industry. It's the first official step in a transition that will put individual providers on a rational, efficient, single standard for code sets and electronic health-care transactions.

Providers also are protected by Washington Medicaid's dual-support plan. Dual support means providers who are not yet HIPAA-compliant still will be able to file claims the old way. There is no need to switch to paper claims, and the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has clearly said that providers who are pursuing compliance in good faith do not have to worry about liability during the transition. Medicare has also adopted dual support.

**MAA-HIPAA
Bulletin No. 8
October 15, 2003**

ELIGIBILITY CHECKS: One of the first benefits of the new HIPAA-compliant universe will be available from Medicaid beginning Thursday. It is the free 270-271 eligibility inquiry and response system, which lets HIPAA-compliant providers (who must be enrolled with ACS) easily check clients' eligibility via computer and receive a quick electronic response within two or three seconds. The 270 format is filed by the provider, and the 271 is the automatic response, telling providers whether the person in the query is eligible for coverage. (The current eligibility-check system remains in operation for providers still checking eligibility the old way.)

HELP LINES: Providers who need technical advice from Medicaid's contractor, Affiliated Computer Services (ACS), can try to time their calls to 1-800-833-2051 for best effect. The line is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. PDT, but the late afternoon is the best time to call because the call center is located in Florida, the base for ACS state services. By 3 or 4 p.m. our time, calls from states back East will fall off, leaving more operators available to handle queries from Washington.

WINASAP UPDATES: Providers who are planning to become HIPAA-compliant via the new free WINASAP 2003 software should remember to update their system by downloading the new versions periodically available on the ACS Web site. To avoid losing data, operators need to back up their system before trying to download the new version. Call 1-800-833-2051 for technical advice on the process.

SWITCHING TO LIVE CLAIMS: Providers who are ready to file HIPAA-compliant claims or their clearinghouses **MUST** go to Medicaid's HIPAA Web site and switch their status from "test" to "production." Medicaid is requiring this proactive declaration in order to rule out the possibility of mistaking test claims for real ones. This applies to all three major kinds of claim formats: 837p (physician/professional); 837i (institutional/hospital); and 837d (dental). **NOTE:** This notice only applies to providers filing HIPAA-compliant electronic claims. Providers using their old system to file claims (including paper claims) are not affected.

POS CLAIMS: Pharmacists filing claims in their HIPAA-compliant Point of Sale (POS) systems also do not need to enroll or touch base with MAA or ACS before filing real claims on Thursday. (The POS system in the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) will be able to handle either 5.1 or 3.2 claims on Thursday.)

CLEARINGHOUSE CHECKS: The new HIPAA claims will travel a technological maze to arrive at their destination. The destination system will send back a claims acknowledgement (called a “997”) so the sender knows that its claims made it. If the claims had problems along the way, the 997 also will indicate which claims need to be corrected and resent. Clearinghouses will get the 997 back for claims submitted for their providers, and providers should check with them this week to make sure they know how the clearinghouse plans to relay the 997 to providers. (**NOTE:** WINASAP2003 users don’t have to be concerned – the 997 information is piped back directly to the WINASAP user when he or she uses the “receive file” procedure.)

DAILY EDI CHECKS: Medicaid will have another backstop for providers. A daily EDI report will let ACS and MAA compare the claims that enter EDI to the claims that are adjudicated by MMIS. Any claims that fall through the cracks can be identified that way, letting the technicians help providers determine what problems caused the rejection.

DUAL SUPPORT: Washington State is modifying its current Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) computers to handle the new HIPAA-compliant claims. But Medicaid is not turning off its current claims-handling process, so Washington providers will have a backup if their HIPAA claims run into difficulty. MAA also advises against reverting to paper claims, because the processing takes longer and will delay everyone’s claims reimbursements.

HIPAA HELP (Save these contacts):

- **Affiliated Computer Services (ACS)** hot line for technical testing questions on software or ACS EDI GATEWAY SERVICES: [1-800-833-2051](tel:1-800-833-2051)
- **DSHS HIPAA Web site** for free software and HIPAA-compliance information:
<http://maa.dshs.wa.gov/dshshipaa>
- **Federal HIPAA compliance site**, with practical advice for providers and the answers to frequently-asked questions (FAQ): <http://www.cms.gov/hipaa>
- **Executive summary of MAA’s HIPAA compliance plan:**
http://maa.dshs.wa.gov/dshshipaa/attachments/pdf/HIPAAExecSummary_012804.pdf
- **ACS EDI Gateway, Inc.:** http://www.acs-gcro.com/Medicaid_Accounts/medicaid_accounts.htm
- **POS:** Email provider.relations@acs-inc.com or call [1-800-365-4944](tel:1-800-365-4944) to get in contact with customer service representatives and set up testing. Information is also available on the ACS Web site at: <http://www.acspbmhipaa.com>
- **SPECIAL POS SUPPORT:** Randy Stamp (randy.stamp@acs-inc.com)

HUMAN CONTACT:

Chris Johnson, HIPAA Contingency Planning, 360-725-1239

Bob Burlingame, HIPAA Provider Testing, 360-725-1256

Becky Boutilier, HIPAA Communications Manager, 360-725-2129 (boutibm@dshs.wa.gov)

Jim Stevenson, MAA Communications Director, 360-725-1915 (stevej2@dshs.wa.gov)

Send email questions to hipaacomunications@dshs.wa.gov

HELP A COLLEAGUE:

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